The A. F. of L. Weekly News Letter contains a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

Entered as second-class matter September 18, 1912, at the postoffice at Washington, D. C., under the act of August 24, 1912.

AGITATE! EDUCATE! ORGANIZE!

VOL. 6. NO. 36. WASHINGTON, D. C., SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1916. WHOLE NO. 296.

A. F. of L. Convention, 1916, Will Prove Historic

Baltimore, Dec. 2.—The thirty-sixth annual convention of the American Federation of Labor adjourned to meet next year in Buffalo. Old officers were unanimously elected, no other names having been presented.

John Golden, president of the United Textile Workers' union, and Frank Farrington, president of the Illinois district, United Mine Workers' union, were elected fraternal delegates to the British Trades Union Congress.

Emanuel Koveleski, representing the Hotel and Restaurant Employes' International Alliance and Bartenders' International League of America, was elected fraternal delegate to the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada.

The convention proceedings will prove historic and were marked by a fine spirit of solidarity that reached a high plane on both fundamental questions and methods of policy, although the discussions were at all times vigorous enough to dispel any illusion that the trade union movement is not democratic.

Other features were the presence, for the first time, of delegates representing the Bricklayers, Masons, and Plasterers' International union and the American Federation of Teachers, both of which are now affiliated to the A. F. of L., and the appearance of the executives of the four railroad brotherhoods, who addressed the convention.

Increasing opposition to strike injunctions was recorded in the convention declaration that these writs should henceforth be ignored, "let the consequences be what they may." The effect of this decision is shown in the alarm of newspapers at labor's so-called "defiance of law," entirely ignoring the fact that congress has outlawed these writs, now issued by state judges, who would deny constitutional guarantees.

The A. F. of L. non-partisan political policy was given hearty approval.

Organized labor is urged to greater activity in securing more proportionate representation "not only in city councils, state legislatures and in congress, but also on every city, state and federal commission that deals with public policies or matters of general concern."

The eight-hour day for all workers was again indorsed.

Because of the present eight-hour situation on railroads, and the fact that the Adamson law is now before the courts, the convention took this action on several resolutions calling for eight hours by law: "We pledge the unswerving determination of the American labor movement to the eight-hour principle, and in order to carry out this purpose your committee recommends that the foregoing resolutions be referred to a special committee to be appointed by the president of the American Federation of Labor, with powers to confer with representatives of the organized employes of the transportation companies, the committee to report to the executive council of the A. F. of L. at the time and in the manner it deems advisable, but at least four weeks before the next annual convention of the A. F. of L."

Opposition to all forms of militarism as a part of physical training was recorded. "Militarism," it was declared, "even in its less horrid manifestations, brutalizes those influenced by the spirit of the institution."

President Wilson and congress were asked to place an embargo on wheat until domestic needs are provided for.

The question of old-age pensions was referred to the executive council for study and investigation.

Opposition was registered to all forms of investigation of industrial disputes that would deny workers the right to quit their employment.

The executive council, through the president of the A. F. of L., is empowered to appoint a committee of five to consider the question of co-operation, and investigate all phases of this theory.

The convention declared that "a system of free text books is an essential of genuinely free and democratic public schools." The right of teachers to organize and affiliate with labor was demanded, and it was further declared that: "If our children, during their more impressionable years, are to have the benefit of daily contact with examples of upstanding American manhood and womanhood, and not to be exposed to an atmosphere of servility in the schoolroom, teachers must be given warning and a hearing before being separated from the service."

The executive council was instructed to establish a legal bureau of information under the direction and supervision of the executive council, the expense of same to be paid out of the general funds of the A. F. of L.

A motion to increase the per capita tax from 3-4 to 1 cent a month per member to create a legal bureau was defeated.

On the question of international labor relations the convention urged that further efforts be made to have labor represented at the time and place the treaty-making congress that will end the present war will be held. While this plan has not been supported by some of the workers of the warring nations it was stated that "we recommend that further effort be made to clear away the misapprehensions or whatever there may be of groundless opposition to the conference."

"The purposes of the Mexican revolution," it was declared, "appeal to the highest concepts and impulses of all liberty loving men and women." Attention was called to a decree by General Carranza, August 1 last, providing for death penalty for those "who may incite workmen to strike in factories and concerns devoted to public service." The convention indorsed President Gompers' protests against this decree, and declared that "labor's sympathy with and approval of that government (Mexico) were based upon the friendly, hopeful relations between it and the labor movement of Mexico, and that continuation of that policy is necessary to our confidence."

The executive council was instructed to "exert every available effort to first be helpful in organizing the workers of all Pan-American republics and, secondly, to federate them in the Pan-American Federation of Labor."

Japanese workers were congratulated for their efforts to organize in their native land and the executive council was instructed to continue its friendly office to be helpful to these workers. The convention declared that "in the spirit alone of imperative necessity and self-protection," did organized workers demand exclusion of these and other far east workers.

The convention proceedings covered the entire field of economic, political, and judicial questions in a manner that indicates increasing solidarity and intelligence on the part of the men and women of labor, who are becoming conscious of their power to a degree undreamed of a few years ago.

STOCKHOLDER ANSWERS ANTI-UNION EMPLOYER

New York, Dec. 2.—When James H. Ecob, stockholder of the Third Avenue Railways company, made a public protest, a few days ago, against the anti-union policy of President Whitridge of that company the latter answered that he "would not touch a union man with a pair of tongs 10 feet long."

In his reply Dr. Ecob says:

"I am quite sure that such a spirit of intolerance and bitterness is a very poor equipment for dealing with the grave and complex questions now pending between capital and labor.

"In your newspaper reply you show that you have got no farther than 'being good to your men.' You say that you provide club rooms, and, under an insurance system, $1,000 is allowed to the families of the men who die. It is a commonplace that any employer who is not good to his men is lacking in business shrewdness. On the same principle, a liveryman is 'good' to his horses. In the old slavery days the 'good' driver was not the one with an iron fist and a black-snake whip. He was the good driver whose slaves went to the field laughing and singing. Efficiency experts tell us today that good temper and contentment are the best possible labor assets. Ten or 15 years ago your 'goodness' to your men would have been hailed with sincere applause. Today we say, of course, that is not social service, but cold hard sense and good business, provided the men feel satisfied with your form of paternalism.

"But the fact is that the men were not satisfied. They were harrassed by your parallel system of rules and fines and by a form of government that was accomplished by espionage, coercion and intimidation. There was a reason why the street car men of this city were looked upon as the most discourteous public servants in any city in the country.

"Your 'goodness' to your men failed to make better public servants, to make more contented men, and even failed to prevent their wanting to organize.

"The trouble is not so much with your holding ideas of benevolent despotism as it is with our public service commission, that has neglected to set up standards of social service, as well as standards of business service. This public body has not set up any compulsory standards to which you must adhere as to such working conditions as the right to organize and to bargain collectively, but the public, I hope, will soon say to you that it does not propose to have its own creation read it obsolete feudal laws in dealing with employes."

"MOLDING" PUBLIC OPINION.

New York, Dec. 2.—President Carter of the Brotherhood of Firemen and Enginemen exposed the fiction that newspapers mold public opinion because of patriotic motives.

In an address before the annual meeting of the academy of political science, the brotherhood executive said:

"In their efforts to convince the American people that railroad employes should not secure an eight-hour day, we have reasons to believe that many millions of dollars were expended in an attempt to suborn the public press of the nation. We have evidence that in this publicity campaign these railroad financial directors employed the advertising pages of more than 3,000 daily and more than 14,000 weekly papers. Before these millions were poured into the advertising profits of these newspapers, many were friendly to our cause and a majority were at least neutral. Almost immediately the editorial opinions of these same newspapers voiced similar sentiments to those expressed in their advertising pages."

EMPLOYERS REJECT AWARD.

Hamilton, Ontario, Dec. 2.—Machinists are still on strike to enforce a government award that machinists' hours be reduced in war munition factories in this city. This strike illustrates the impotency of the Canadian industrial disputes act, which has been condemned by Dominion trade unionists, but which is lauded by certain elements in the United States.

While the law originally applied only to public utilities, the Canadian government recently placed war munitions in the list of public utilities. When the machinists demanded a reduction of hours the government commission declared for a nine-hour day. This the employers have refused to accept and now the workers are striking to enforce the award.

LIABILITY MEN PLEAD.

Columbus, Ohio, Dec. 2.—As a result of the election of former Governor James M. Cox private liability companies in this state are on their knees. Two years ago Governor Cox was defeated for re-election after he had jammed through the legislature a workmen's compensation law. During the past two years the law has been weakened so that private companies are now writing insurance. In the last campaign this issue was pushed to the fore by organized labor and Cox promised that he would drive the companies out of the state if re-elected.

The companies are fearful of this threat and it is now claimed that they are willing to retire voluntarily if no legislation is passed. They realize that ouster laws would affect them in other states.

ANTHRAX IS AN OLD DISEASE.

Albany, N. Y., Dec. 2.—In a special bulletin issued by the state industrial commission, the disease known as anthrax is stated to have been "a scourge to men and beasts" from the earliest times. It is declared to be primarily an animal disease and is frequently transmitted to man, especially through hides imported to this country.

Sanitation of workshops, the necessity of employes avoiding infection and the daily inspection of every establishment where articles liable to be infected with anthrax are handled are among the principle recommendations for combatting this disease.

NEW USE OF INJUNCTION.

Clearfield, Pa., Dec. 2.—Judge Singleton Bell has granted an injunction restraining the Moshanon Coal company from paying its employes an advance amounting to 33 1-3 per cent above the scale of this district. A. L. Cole, attorney for the Central Pennsylvania Operators' association, claimed that the advanced rate is a breach of the scale contract between the miners' and the operators' organizations, of which the coal company is a party.

BROOM MAKERS ADVANCE.

Hamilton, Ontario, Dec. 2.—Walter Wood & Co. have given their whisk and broom makers a voluntary increase of 10 per cent, although their wage agreement does not expire until next spring.

INDUSTRIAL MISHAPS BLAMED ON EMPLOYERS

Harrisburg, Pa., Dec. 2.—Dr. J. W. Schereschewsky of the federal public health service, together with other health authorities, disagreed with mechanical experts before the fourth annual industrial and efficiency conference, that "four per cent of the industrial mishaps to workers could be remedied by better equipment, but the other accidents were due to the men."

A workman toils in a poorly lighted room; his eyes become fatigued; there is an accident. Is that the fault of the man? asked these medical men.

Shop ventilation is poor; the workman is poisoned with foul air and becomes stupified; there is an accident—the fault of ventilation.

Sickness, said the doctors, was in most cases an industrial accident, generally due to poor working conditions. There are 30,000,000 workers in the country. Each one of them averaged nine days of preventable sickness a year, or 260,000,000 days wasted.

Foremen who took no thought of "teaming" men of the same physical strength, who paid no attention to lighting, who laughed when anyone talked ventilation, were in charge of most of the plants. The foreman did not ascertain whether a man was mentally fitted for his task. He would hire an epileptic. He worked men until they dropped.

Millard B. King, director of industrial education in this state, advocated industrial training to avoid accidents. He believes that if the eye, the hand and the brain of children are trained, it will enable them to become acquainted with "the atmosphere of industry." He said safety lessons should also be taught, but agreed that his plan for lessening accidents would require more time than the plan favored by the medical men.

OVERWORK ENDANGERS U. S.

New York, Dec. 2.—American people are overworked and are approaching a breakdown declares Miss Josephine Goldmark, of the National Consumers' league, who repeats the insistent claim of organized labor that shorter working days are necessary to preserve health and ideals.

"Overwork is the greatest single menace to public health in America," she said. "People are dying younger in America than ever before. Workers are wearing out more quickly. The diseases which are carrying them off are plainly the diseases of overwork. The death rate from apoplexy and nervous diseases has increased 19 per cent in 10 years, according to the census records of 5,000,000 working people; from heart disease the increase has been 29 per cent; from diseases of the kidneys and urinary system, 46 per cent; and from diseases of the liver and digestive organs, 24 per cent. It does not take a physician to know that these diseases are typically the diseases of fatigue.

"Fatigue is poison. It is the poisoning of the system by worn-out cells which would normally be carried out of it. If activity is not balanced by rest, life itself is threatened."

RAIL ACCIDENTS INCREASE.

Harrisburg, Pa., Dec. 2.—Steam railroad accidents in Pennsylvania were 9 per cent more numerous in the year ending June 30 last than in the same period a year before, and on electric railroads 10 per cent higher. During the year 1,136 persons were killed and 16,419 injured on the railroads and 174 killed and 2,258 injured on the trolley lines.

Railroad employes constitute the largest number injured, but trespassers were the sufferers in fatalities. There were 373 employes killed and 8,594 hurt; 14 passengers killed and 660 injured; 508 trespassers killed and 596 injured; 181 travelers over crossings killed and 357 hurt, and 22 of other classifications killed and 22 injured.

HUGE STANDARD OIL PROFITS.

New York, Dec. 2.—Holders of Standard Oil stocks will receive nearly $100,000,000 in cash this year. Add to this the distributions made as stocks and dividends and the amount reaches $128,909,663, as compared with $89,791,000 last year.

On December 1, 1911, the United States Supreme court dissolved the old Standard Oil trust and broke it up into 30 or more companies. Since that time, the total cash distributions made by the system's companies total $384,308,858. In addition stock dividends have been made in the same period to an aggregate of $137,448,330 at par, but actually worth to the beneficiaries several times that much.

THREATEN RETAIL CLERKS.

Beaumont, Tex., Dec. 2.—Because the Retail Clerks' union is asking fellow unionists and sympathizers to not patronize two stores hostile to them, lawyers have notified the unionists if they continue to "interfere with the business" of their clients injunction proceedings will be started against them.

The clerks are continuing in the exercise of their constitutional right of free press and free speech, even though it reduces dividends of cheap-labor and long-hour employers.

TRACK MEN RAISE WAGES.

Detroit, Mich., Dec. 2.—Officers of the International Brotherhood of Maintenance-of-Way Employes announce that as a result of conferences the Grand Trunk railroad has raised wages 20 cents a day for section foremen, yard foremen and extra gang foremen, and 25 cents a day for yard and section laborers. The increases will date from September 1 last and affects 4,000 employes.

Valuable working rules were also obtained and hours on Saturday were reduced from 10 to nine.

MILLIONS OF WATERED STOCK.

Washington, Dec. 2.—The interstate commerce commission has completed its work of compiling the physical valuation of the New Orleans, Texas & Mexico railroad and places the cost of reproducing this property at $3,866,636. It is capitalized at $40,933,081. The report shows the original cost of the line equipped was $12,194,131. The record cost of the road's equipment, it is stated, was found to be unduly large.

WITHDRAW INJUNCTION SUIT.

Joplin, Mo., Dec. 2.—An employing plumber in this city has adjusted differences with the Carpenters' and Plumbers' unions and has withdraw injunction proceedings against the entire local labor movement.

The court proceedings solidified organized labor instead of frightening it and this fact made peace possible.

FAVORS PENSIONS FOR BLIND.

Jefferson City, Mo., Dec. 2.—Official figures show that the state constitutional amendment favoring pensions for the blind was adopted at the recent election by a plurality of [illegible].

SAYS COURTS USURP POWER

Baltimore, Dec. 2.—In an editorial on Federal Judge Hook's decision invalidating the railroad eight-hour law, the Evening Sun of this city makes this editorial comment:

"That a district judge in Missouri should possess the power to declare invalid an act of the highest legislative body in the nation and issue an injunction against it is one of the curiosities of our form of government not to be found, we believe, in any other on earth. As a correspondent in the Forum points out, the framers of the constitution, or many of them, never contemplated that any such power should be given the courts, and in fact they did not have it until Chief Justice Marshall assumed it—or, as our correspondent claims, 'usurped it.'"

The Forum, referred to by the Evening Sun, is a correspondent's column, conducted by that paper, in which a writer says:

"What informed man does not know that the practice of declaring acts of congress unconstitutional is a usurped power without any constitutional authority whatever?

'Who does not know that Judge Marshall, injudicious and partisan, with almost as little confidence in the masses, as for instance a Root in this modern day, arrogated to the court that power?

"What student with a little thoroughness in his make-up has not discovered that in the days of so-called 'reconstruction' congress actually did by legislative enactment prevent the Supreme court from passing upon the constitutionality of the 'Reconstruction acts?'

"Mr. Editor, in the lexicon of jurists precedent is a mighty word, but precedent unfortunately has proved ofttimes a mighty obstacle to progress."

MEDICAL MAN TALKS PLAIN.

Philadelphia, Dec. 2.—At a meeting of doctors in this city, Dr. Charles A. E. Codman, president of the State Medical society, stated that for the first time in history the medical profession will be represented at the state capital in a united body when the next legislature convenes to urge longer limits of attendance and higher fees in workmen's compensation cases.

"We know what we want, what we are going to ask for, and we are going to get it," he said.

If a trade unionist indulged in this plain talk ponderous editorials would be written on "the futility of intimidation and coercion."

STOVE MOUNTERS GAIN.

Rochester, Pa., Dec. 2.—The Olive Stove Works has reached an agreement with Stove Mounters and Range Workers' union No. 97. Wages are increased 10 per cent and hereafter working hours will be 8 3-4 hours five days a week and 8 1-2 hours on Saturday.

Reading, Pa., Dec. 2.—Stove Mounters' union No. 42 has settled its differences with the Reading Stove Works. The union's grievance committee is recognized, and a nine-hour day and wage increases are agreed to.

HERE IS REAL EFFICIENCY.

Harrisburg, Pa., Dec. 2.—Samuel S. Marquis of the Ford Automobile company addressed the fourth annual industrial and efficiency conference on the subject of "hiring and firing" workers, and gave those people who utter catchy "efficiency" phrases something to think about.

He said the Ford plant has abandoned the plan of employing and dismissing men by wholesale because the company found that it cost on an average $100 to break in a new man. Instead of hiring 53,000 men every 12 months to keep a force of 14,000 men intact, Ford was now employing some 40,000 men, discharging 27 where he used to discharge 2,000, and employing 2,000 where he formerly employed 25 times as many.

"Make it for the workers' interest to work for your interest," said the speaker. "Men quit places because of long hours, low wages or because attention was not given to the matter of seeing that they had jobs that were suited to them, or because of the petty tyranny of underbosses. Foremen are not allowed to fire at the Ford works. They can discharge men from their departments. The man fired in one department generally finds a congenial place at last and then sticks."

MILWAUKEE HOUSING PROBLEM.

Milwaukee, Dec. 2.—This city's housing facilities have been surveyed by the municipal health department and it is found that fully 50 per cent of the problem is due to overcrowded conditions. Out of 3,384 deaths occurring from contagious diseases, including typhoid fever and tuberculosis, during the five years from 1911 to 1915 inclusive, 28.5 per cent occurred in districts having special housing problems. More than 21 per cent of the deaths of children under 5 during 1915 occurred in these bad housing districts. It is stated that 44 per cent of bad housing conditions exist because there are no laws by which they can be eliminated.

BENEFITS FOR INJURED.

St. Paul, Minn., Dec. 2.—During the period of two years and nine months ending Oct. 1 last there were 450 fatal accidents and 36,476 non-fatal accidents reported to the state department of labor. Of these 405 of the former and 32,496 of the latter came under the state compensation law and were paid benefits to the amount of $[illegible].

HOURS REDUCED IN IOWA.

Sioux City, Iowa, Dec. 2.—Dyers, cleaners and pressers suspended work to enforce recognition of their union and to reduce hours from 16 and 12 to nine. After a 24-hour strike the employers granted all demands.

Hoisting engineers in this city have organized a union.

SUFFRAGE FOR PORTO RICO

Baltimore, Dec. 2.—The A. F. of L. convention, last week, declared that American citizenship should be granted with all the inherent and civil rights to the people of Porto Rico.

"They belong to the United States, but, under present conditions, are not citizens thereof," it was stated. "The American nation is in duty bound to give the people of Porto Rico the necessary opportunity for their betterment and the protection of their rights."

President Gompers was instructed to bring this matter to the attention of President Wilson and congress "and to do everything possible to achieve the fulfillment of the hopes and aspirations of our fellow workers in Porto Rico."

The report of the committee, which was unanimously adopted by the convention, further said:

"For years the Free Federation of Workingmen of Porto Rico has demanded an investigation of the economic and social conditions of the workers, prior to any change in the organic act of law that might be enacted by congress.

"The deplorable condition of the workers of Porto Rico is predicated on the system of production and the concentration of wealth in the hands of the few. Over two-thirds of this wealth, taken from the island's soil, is taken abroad, thus minimizing the local circulation of money and neutralizing individual activities to the extent of reducing the workers to a state of servitude, to be exploited by the corporations.

"The sugar and tobacco trusts are under the control of a number of persons who are non-residents of the island. They consider the Porto Rico workman only as a means to produce accumulative wealth at a low cost for the exploiting classes."

BOYCOTT IS RECOGNIZED.

Troy, N. Y., Dec. 2.—The horrid boycott, formerly advocated only by trade unionists and denounced by every "law-abiding" citizen, is recognized by Mayor Burns of this city, who, in his capacity as chairman of the conference of mayors of this state, has issued a state-wide call for a boycott on eggs, because of high prices.

When organized workers took this position in regard to a certain headgear, manufactured in Danbury, their homes were confiscated, though the decision closed the White House door to a gentleman who is now practicing law in New York city.

BLACKSMITHS RAISE WAGES.

Brockton, Mass., Dec. 2.—The state board of conciliation and arbitration has awarded blacksmiths wage increases as follows: Forge men, from $19 to $20 a week; floor men, from $16 to $18 a week. These workers were on strike for two months and the matter was finally submitted to the state board.

PIPE WORKERS RAISE WAGES.

St. Louis, Mo., Dec. 2.—After a week's strike 350 organized steamfitters' helpers raised wages 50 cents a day.

UNIONISM PRAISED; A. F. OF L. OFFICIALS THANKED

Baltimore, Dec. 2.—In the closing days of the A. F. of L. convention the following tribute to the trade union movement, to the officers and to the individual members of the American Federation of Labor was submitted by the committee on report of executive council and unanimously adopted:

"Reviewing and reflecting upon the history of the American trade union movement, its struggle, achievements and accomplishments as related in the report of the executive council no impartial observer or unbiased student can doubt for one moment the efficacy of our movement and the high and lofty character of its aims and purposes, hopes and aspirations.

"The history of the organized labor struggle reveals that in its inception the trade union movement was looked upon as too insignificant for attention and omitted entirely from serious consideration. As the movement gained in strength, power and influence, when the workers' movement of our country compelled public recognition, it was treated with contempt and uncompromising hostility, regarded as a social enemy and an obstacle to our economic and industrial progress. All this has changed. Trade unions are today acknowledged essential to the interests of the men and women of labor and justified as an invaluable institution to human progress and for the advancement of a higher and a greater civilization.

"The efficacy of trade unionism is conclusively proven by the rapidity with which its principles are spreading among the workers and the eagerness with which its good will and support is sought by those inspired by the high motives of improving the lot of mankind and advancing the doctrines of true brotherhood. New adherents and additional supporters are being attracted to the trade union movement each succeeding day and with each recurring year. Today the American Federation of Labor embraces within its membership approximately two and a quarter million members.

"What greater inspiration could be asked for? What greater source of hope and encouragement can we find for continued and persistent efforts in the cause of labor? The prospects of the future of the workers of America are higher than ever. Few realize that no previous time was more eventful in the life of our economic and industrial society than the age in which we are living. Great economic and social forces are sweeping over our country and of which we are but half-conscious. Such is the era in which we are living. Such is the influence and power of our great American labor movement.

"Underlying all the activities is evidenced, silently, yet with certainty, the ever thoughtful observer, the careful and clear thinking student and the sympathetic but courageous heart and mind of our president, Samuel Gompers. We unhesitatingly commend him for his unquestioned devotion to our cause and for his unqualified and unreserved contribution of his great ability to our movement.

"We, too, commend Secretary Morrison for his unquestioned loyalty and for unlimited devotion to our cause. Painstaking in the particular work delegated to his care, accurate in the manifold duties of his office, and imbued with a spirit of loyalty, unblemished and untarnished, we congratulate him upon the efficient response to our cause and movement. And so we also heartily commend for your thanks, approval and appreciation the work of your treasurer and that of your vice-presidents, constituting the executive council, in all matters having been considered and acted upon by them during the past year and as reported to this convention. Indeed, the organized workers themselves are deserving of congratulation for the prudency and foresight so splendidly portrayed by their fealty and loyalty to the human and civilizing principles of our cause and of our movement."

EIGHT-HOUR LAW TEST BEFORE HIGH COURT

Washington, Dec. 2.—Railroad managers and the government have come to an agreement on carrying the fight over the eight-hour law to the United States Supreme court. They have decided to use the recent decision by Federal Judge Hook, in Kansas City, as the vehicle for all their arguments for and against the constitutionality of the Adamson law.

Under the terms of this agreement both sides will appear before the United States Supreme court, when it convenes December 4, and join in a plea to have the Missouri, Oklahoma & Gulf railroad case advanced so there may be a speedy decision.

Meanwhile no more suits will be filed by the railroads against the law and the managers will prepare for an adverse decision by so arranging their accounts that they may be able to meet any demands of their employes because of a failure to work them but eight hours.

It is understood that the railroads wanted the law tested in the case of a larger railroad, especially the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe, but the government insisted that every question of law was contained in the Judge Hook decision, which involved a smaller road. The government agrees, however, that any railroad may file arguments in such manner as to include their objections to the law.

Baltimore, Dec. 2.—In a speech before the A. F. of L. convention last week President Gompers digressed for a moment to make this reference to Federal Judge Hook's ruling that the Adamson eight-hour law is unconstitutional:

"If it was the intention of Judge Hook to give the opportunity for the test as to the constitutionality of the law, why did he not declare it constitutional and make the other fellow test its constitutionality? Why did he not place the burden of proof of its unconstitutionality upon the railroad managers who want to evade and avoid it, instead of upon the government to affirm the constitutionality of the law? I call your attention to the industrial contrast manifested in the mental attitude of the old-time judiciary, some of whom are still holding office, appointed under the old regime, and who regard labor as a commodity and article of commerce."

MINERS PROFIT BY UNIONISM.

Denver, Dec. 2.—When miners are organized the practice of operators who rob them through the medium of weighing coal is ended, because union miners demand their own checkweighmen.

The advantages of unionization were shown by Secretary Doyle of the Colorado district, United Mine Workers' union, after his visit to a mine near Ludlow, which was organized last June. Before the union was formed the average weight of 21 cars of coal mined was 3,682 pounds per car. After the miners had organized and selected their own checkweighman the records show that the average weight of 225 cars was 8,184 pounds, or nearly a 500-pound gain on each car.

"When it is known that the cost to the small number of miners in this mine to support the checkweighman is only about [illegible] pounds of coal per day," said Secretary Doyle, "and that in a day's work of 10 cars the miner gains 4,750 pounds after paying his portion of the checkweighman's wages, it can be seen what unionism means to these men."

PORTO RICANS EXPLOITED.

San Juan, Porto Rico, Dec. 2.—The trade union movement has warned the workers against leaving the island on verbal promise or contract. It is stated that a company is inducing Porto Rican workers to emigrate to Venezuela and then refuse to carry out its promises.

"It is the same old song, over and over again," says Justicia, official newspaper of Porto Rican trade unionists. "The traffickers of human flesh, or rather laborers' flesh fit only to be exploited, reap a golden harvest selling these laborers like mere cattle to the exploiters. They make all sorts of fine offers to induce them to quit their native country, and then, under the control of other corporations, these unfortunate laborers are turned over, lock, stock and barrel, to the most ignominious slavery, even more so than that which they are wont to experience in their own land."

LARGE RAIL DIVIDENDS.

New York, Dec. 2.—While the Baltimore & Ohio railroad opposes an eight-hour day for its train service employes, its stockholders have fared well during the past fiscal year, according to a report just issued. The road has earned a surplus of $3,664,463 after paying the regular 4 per cent dividend on the preferred and 5 per cent on the common stocks. Gross revenues amounted to $111,682,620, an increase of 21 per cent over 1915, and $10,112,548 greater than the previous high record gross of 1913. Net revenues were $32,348,376, an increase of practically 16 per cent.

COAL MINERS' STRIKE ENDS.

McAlester, Okla., Dec. 2.—Coal miners in the Oklahoma field have reached an agreement with operators and 9,000 employes have returned to work. They suspended work November 1.

One section of the agreement provides that if a miner has been denied employment and an investigation proves he has been done an injustice the mine management shall give him employment and pay him compensation for time lost not to exceed [illegible] days. It is further provided that these cases shall take precedence over all other cases except shutdowns.

TELEPHONE GIRLS STRIKE.

Toledo, Ohio, Dec. 2.—Because four members of the newly-organized Telephone Operators' union were discharged, telephone girls employed by the Home Telephone company suspended work. Later they were joined by the Electrical Workers' union.

Officers of the Central Labor Union are assisting the strikers. The unionists ask that the question be arbitrated. Officers of the company plead that they do not understand the terms used by the unionists, and the latter reply that this is a feeble attempt to gain time that strikebreakers may be imported.

UNION OFFICIAL DIES.

Pittsburg, Pa., Dec. 2.—First Vice President John J. Thorpe, of the Amalgamated Street Car Men's union, died at Hot Springs, Ark., because of a physical breakdown that was the result of his activities in the Indianapolis street car strike three years ago.

Deceased was business agent of local Street Car Men's union No. 85. While the remains were being lowered into the grave every street car in the Pittsburg district halted for half a minute while motormen and conductors stood with bared heads as a tribute to their departed fellow worker.

PHARISEES SCORED BY A. F. OF L. CHIEF

Baltimore, Dec. 2.—"Literal revolution!" "Wild orgie of unrest!" screams the Baltimore American in an editorial attack on President Gompers, who is charged with "attacking capital" because he voiced labor's sympathy with the railroad employes' eight-hour movement.

"In contrast with Mr. Gompers, who comes here to preach a doctrine of unexampled violence," says the American, "is to be placed Mr. Schwab, who came to Baltimore to make declaration of intent to provide industries for the city that will afford employment to 20,000 persons."

In his reply before the A. F. of L. convention to this attack, President Gompers scored "the Pharisees who stand in the way and try to drive us into the mire and miasma of misery and despair."

"You cannot fool us very much and you cannot frighten us at all," he said.

"Mr. Schwab, the president of the Bethlehem Steel company, was indicted by the federal bureau of labor, with a political partisan of his own at its head, for being one of the worst taskmasters for his workers that existed in all our country. The indictment shows that in addition to paying low wages, the Bethlehem steel plant, of which Mr. Schwab is the president, operated 24 hours a day, in two shifts of 12 hours each, for seven days in the week and every day and week in the year.

"The publication of the report of the bureau of labor dealing with this wonderful, courageous, able and sacred gentleman, Mr. Charles Schwab, was due to the American Federation of Labor—and I am glad to have a part in it.

"It is good that the head writer, or the editorial writer, gave the editorial the caption he did, 'An Industrial Contrast.' I hope that, so long as I may live, and Mr. Schwab shall pursue his present industrial course in dealing with the working people, that the contrast will be more accentuated every day.

"Mr. Schwab came to this city and was banquetted. Whether the banquet was provided by the money he had extorted from his underpaid and overworked employes, or whether some of the elite of Baltimore who expected to participate and to bask in the sunlight of Mr. Schwab when he establishes his plant in Baltimore, I do not know, but frequently baits of this character are held out by both sides.

"The sum total of our offense, and my own included, is the fact that we have stood true, we have rung true. We know our rights as sovereign citizens of this country, and there is no power or influence which can swerve us or shunt us off the track. We are going along mindful of our obligations and duties and assertive of the rights which are guaranteed us under the constitution and implied in the institutions of this republic."

R. R. MEN STAND ON SIDE LINES.

Washington, Dec. 2.—Attorneys representing the government are combatting the railroads' attempt to set aside the Adamson eight-hour law.

"We are not going to employ attorneys," said Grand Chief Stone, of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, in his address to the American Federation of Labor convention at Baltimore.

"We are going to be an interested spectator on the side lines. We are going to see the railroad corporations of this country fight the government they live under.

"I think the railroads had the idea that we were going to employ attorneys and use up all the funds we had in these organizations to fight injunction suits, because in the neighborhood of 3,000 of them will be filed, which would mean employing about 3,000 attorneys.

"Had the railroads wanted to be fair in testing the constitutionality of the law they would have selected some one suit and made a test case of it."

DEMAND FOOD EMBARGO.

Baltimore, Dec. 2.—The A. F. of L. convention, last week, voted unanimously to demand an embargo upon shipments of wheat and other breadstuffs. The report of the federal department of agriculture was quoted to show that the wheat crop is barely sufficient for our own people the coming year, and that present conditions "are a menace to the physical and social well being of the nation." President Wilson and congress are urged to place an embargo in harmony with international law.

A resolution demanding a probe by the department of justice into the increased cost of print paper, which has been doubled and in some cases trebled, within the last year, was also adopted.

COAL FAMINE ARTIFICIAL.

Indianapolis, Dec. 2.—There is no coal famine, says the United Mine Workers' Journal, which declares that the present market conditions is caused by "the manipulation of the coal supply by the speculators who are reaping the difference between the contract prices of coal and the amount they are able to extort from the consumer."

The "car shortage" we hear so much about is partly the result of intentional delay in the transmission of cars and the unloading at distributing points, says the editor.

CIGARMAKERS DEMAND MORE.

Hamilton, Ontario, Dec. 2.—About 300 union cigarmakers are on strike. They are asking an increase of $1 per 1,000 for hand-made cigars and 50 cents per 1,000 for machine-mold cigars. The present wage average is $12.50 a week, and the increase would mean an additional 1 cent for every 15 cigars made on a basis of 1,500 cigars made every week.

TO URGE LABOR LEGISLATION.

Austin, Tex., Dec. 2.—Texas trade unionists are preparing for the next session of the state legislature when they will urge the passage of numerous legislative proposals. The list includes an anti-injunction bill similar to the federal Clayton law, and which will regulate the use of the injunction writ in times of strike.

STREET CAR MEN ADVANCE.

Shawnee, Okla., Dec. 2.—After a two weeks' strike the recently-organized Street Car Men's union secured a better agreement than the one originally presented to the company. Wage increases, a nine-hour day, improved working conditions, and the union shop are the principal gains secured.

U. S. NAVY YARD WINS.

Washington, Dec. 2.—The navy department has rejected the bid of the Cramp Shipbuilding company for two submarines and awarded the contract to the government navy yard at Mare Island. The Cramp bid was $[illegible], and the navy yard bid was $[illegible].